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SUBJECT: INDIAN VIEWS ON USG UNGA GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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[1](#)1. (U) We previewed our 64th UNGA goals and objectives on September 15 with Indian MEA Joint Secretary for UN Political Affairs Asith Bhattacharjee, and on September 16 with MEA Under Secretary for UN Economic and Social Affairs Abhishek Verma. Of the various topics covered in our presentation, the bulk of the Indian response centered on reform of peacekeeping/conflict management operations; UN budget and administrative reform; and reform of gender-related institutions. Indian views on human rights issues are set forth in Ref B.

Peacekeeping/Conflict Management

[1](#)2. (SBU) Having served in DPKO operations all over West Africa, including a stint as political advisor to the SRSG in Liberia, Bhattacharjee expressed strong views on a pressing need to reform the way that peacekeeping mandates are formulated and implemented. Bhattacharjee complained of major planning and policy disconnects between the Security Council, DPKO, and UN teams tasked with carrying out peacekeeping mandates. He stated that UN peacekeeping missions attempt to do too much too soon, often before a mission achieves its threshold objective of establishing stability and security. He also questioned the need for peacekeeping mandates to include various civilian functions that he views as "national level responsibilities" of the host nation, and he referred to DPKO as a "report factory" whose written products often bear little resemblance to ground reality. Bhattacharjee noted with pride that India has been at the forefront of UN peacekeeping efforts since the late 1940s, and stated that India is eager to draw upon its long experience to improve the UN peacekeeping system.

Budget/Administrative Reform

[1](#)3. (SBU) Bhattacharjee said India supports the USG call for UN administrative and budget reform, noting that India's regular UN budget assessment of 0.45 percent is "impinging" on resources. In addition to new reforms, he proposed a review of reform measures that have been implemented in recent years to see if they had achieved desired results. For example, he cautioned that changes in personnel contracting procedures and pay have taken away incentives for UN personnel to serve in the field, particularly in hot spots where they are badly needed. He also called for budget/administrative reform review to be conducted by "autonomous groups outside Security Council control, people who have been on the ground and know the reality." He complained that Indian personnel are still awaiting payment for service in UN missions in Cambodia, Namibia, and Haiti.

Gender-Related Institutions

14. (SBU) MEA Under Secretary for United Nations Economic and Social Division Abhishek Verma told us that the GOI is waiting until certain funding issues are resolved before India decides whether to support a proposal to combine the four existing UN gender-related entities into one new gender-related organization. For his part, Bhattacharjee stated that India is highly supportive of the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues, which he claimed is effective at keeping gender issues "out of politics" and raising the international profile of such issues.
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